



Brownfields Supplemental Assistance

Windham Regional Commission, VT

BACKGROUND

EPA awarded the Windham Regional Commission supplemental assistance for its Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot. The Windham Region encompasses 27 towns in three counties (population 43,405) in the southeast corner of Vermont. Mills and manufacturing industries in the region have closed over the years due to technological changes and reduced dependence on rail and water transportation. Many vacant industrial properties in the region have been on the market for years due to real or perceived contamination. Low-wage jobs in service industries have helped fill the unemployment gap in towns that are struggling to rebuild. One of the most distressed communities in the region is Bellows Falls where 14 percent of residents live in poverty.

The original Pilot created an inventory of sites in need of environmental assessments and established a brownfields steering committee that evaluated 13 sites nominated for the program. Sites selected by the steering committee emphasized downtown areas with low-to moderate-income residents. Although some site assessments were conducted, the original Pilot emphasized aggressive public outreach. The supplemental Pilot will emphasize site assessments. Supplemental funds will be used to assess priority brownfields sites and determine whether they are clean or require cleanup planning. One site that likely will receive Phase I, II, and III environmental assessments through the supplemental assistance is the property surrounding the previously targeted 10-acre TLR Building site in Bellows Falls. This former paper manufacturing site is now a hydroelectric power plant and has strong potential for redevelopment. The supplemental assistance also will target additional sites nominated for environmental assessments. A number of sites nominated for the Pilot are along the Connecticut River, which is an American Heritage River.

PILOT SNAPSHOT



*Windham Regional
Commission, Vermont*

Date of Announcement:
May 2002

Amount: \$ 150,000

Profile: The Windham Regional Commission will conduct environmental assessments on high priority sites with the potential for redevelopment in distressed towns.

Contacts:

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Visit the EPA Region 1 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/region01/brownfields/>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
www.epa.gov/brownfields

OBJECTIVES AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES

The Windham Regional Commission will use its supplemental assistance grant to expand the brownfields program begun under the original Pilot. Funds will be used primarily for site assessments. However, public outreach to affected communities, an inventory update, and ongoing development and implementation of a

strategy for redeveloping brownfields also will be a significant part of the project.

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Conducting community outreach and soliciting community involvement in the ongoing brownfields program;
- Updating the inventory and database of sites begun under the original Pilot; and
- Conducting an estimated three Phase I, two Phase II, and one Phase III environmental assessments at sites targeted by the steering committee.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.